WED. MAR. 18, 1953

REVIEWER'S BOX

Our musical presentation on tonight's Reviewer's Box will consist of exerpts from Daniel Mann's production of "Paint Your Wagon." This light and lively show opened this past summer in Philadelphia and has now taken its place in the ranks with popular modern musicals.

Due to the fact that "Paint Your Wagon" is not one of the most recent Broadway productions we feel that there is little need to review for you the context of the show. Althought not too many of the songs have reached national popularity individually, we hope to give you an idea of the atmosphere and character of the musical through a few of selected tunes from it. The songs are sung by members of the original cast including Olga San Juan and Tony Bavaar.

1. I Talk To The Tree's
2. I still see Elisa
3. I'm on my Way
   All for Him & Wandering Star.

"They Call the Maria"

2'40"

And now back to the American scene and a look at Arthur Miller's latest now running on Broadway, "The Crucible." Last week the American Bar Association asked Mr. Miller to alter some of the dialogue in "The Crucible", a drama about the Salem witch trials in the seventeenth century, because some of the lines are "disparaging of lawyers or the legal profession." However, in a personal interview Arthur Miller said that one of his main purposes in writing the play was to delineate persons who knew what ~~they stood for~~ these people, caught up in the witchcraft delusion, stood for. He found such men and women among those accused of withcraft.

Said Mr. Miller, "Willie Loman (the salesman ~~of~~ in "Death of a Salesman") never knew what he stood for." Willie believed that the secret of success was to be well liked. He died a suicide, with nobody liking him much, apparently not even Mr. Miller.

The principle figure in "The Crucible" is John Proctor, a young Salem farmer who is depicted as knowing that he could save his life by confessing to the prosecutors that he had seen certain persons in the company of the Devil. But in a harrowing jail scene in the presence of his pregnant wife, Proctor refuses to implicate the innocent to save himself. "A man defines himself by what he will do for his own advantage and by what he will not do," Mr. Miller said. "John Proctor knew in the end what he stood for."

The general outlines of the Salem story were familiar to Miller, who had studied ~~his~~ American history in college, to become a teacher. He took lengthy notes for his play from the court record at the Essex County Courthouse in Salem itself.

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his dramatic intentions. For example, there is nothing in the Salem records to show explicitly that John Proctor refused to save his life by implicating innocent persons. But, according to Mr. Miller, it is well established that others of the accused did refuse to make such confessions and that no one who confessed was executed.

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The same hack theme - used previously by Virta and Pauka - of loyal Communists battling Western saboteurs is the basis of A. Sofronov's new play produced in January in Moscow.

Titled "It is Impossible to Live Differently", the piece is set in Eastern Germany with the classic set of Communist heroes and bourgeois villians. The plot purports to deal with the efforts of Western German spies to blow up a steel plant. It has the added wrinkle that the spies succeed in their immediate objective, but really lose out because their dastardly deeds convinces all the East Germans involved that they have to fight for a democratic united Germany on the Soviet pattern. The resemblance of the whole thing to so many of the post-war plays is so great that Sofronov must have written this one with both eyes shut and one hand tied behind his back.

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We feel that a more valuable discussion of the play can be given by the playwright, whom I quote,

"A convention of the play is existence outside of time in a place of no specific locality. If you regard it that way, I suppose it becomes an elaborate allegory, but in New Haven we opened directly across the street from a movie theater that was showing "Peter Pan" in technicolor and it did not seem altogether inappropriate to me. Fairy tales always have some simple moral lesson of good and evil, but that is not the secret of their fascination any more, I hope, than the philosophical import that might be distilled from the fantisies of "Camino Real" is the principal element of its appeal.

"To me the appeal of this work is its unusual degree of freedom. When it began to get under way I felt a new sensation of release. I could not have felt a purely private thrill of release unless I had hope of sharing this experience with lots of audiences to come. My desire was to give these audiences my own sense of something wild and unrestricted that ran like water in the mountains, but this sort of freedom was not intended to be chaos nor anarchy.

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we hope is not so large a number as it is likely to please. At each performance a number of people have stamped out of the auditorium, with little regard for those whom they have to crawl over, almost as if the building had caught on fire. I am at a loss to explain this phenomenon, and I am quite serious when I say that I had never for one moment supposed that the play would seem obscure and confusing to anyone who is willing to meet it even less than half way. It was only when I had to read it aloud to a few of the actors that I came up against the disconcerting surprise that some people would think that the play needed clarification.

"We all have in our conscious and unconscious minds a great vocabulary of images, and I think that all human communication is based on these images, and a symbol in a play has only one legitimate purpose - to say a thing more directly and simply and beautifully than it could be said in words....To modify this effect of complaisance I would like to admit to you quite frankly that I can't say with any personal conviction that I have written a good play. I only know that I have felt a release in this work which I wanted you to feel with me."

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Reviewer's Preview

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